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1845

# ADDRESS

BEFORE THE

## LITERARY SOCIETIES

OF

### HAMILTON COLLEGE.

BY HON. PHILO GRIDLEY.

UTICA :

R. W. ROBERTS, PRINTER, 58 GENESEE STREET.

1845.



AN  
ADDRESS  
DELIVERED BEFORE THE  
LITERARY SOCIETIES  
OF  
HAMILTON COLLEGE,

JULY 22, 1845,

CLINTON, N. Y.

BY HON. PHILO GRIDLEY.

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## CORRESPONDENCE.

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HAMILTON COLLEGE, *October 1, 1845.*

HON. PHILO GRIDLEY,

SIR:—

The undersigned, in behalf of the UNION and PHENIX SOCIETIES of HAMILTON COLLEGE, tender you their thanks for your appropriate ADDRESS, delivered on the occasion of their last ANNIVERSARIES, and respectfully solicit a copy of the same, for publication.

Yours with regard,

D. H. OLMSTEAD, } CORRESPONDING COMMITTEE  
D. W. LANGFORD, } Of UNION SOCIETY.

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UTICA, *October 6, 1845.*

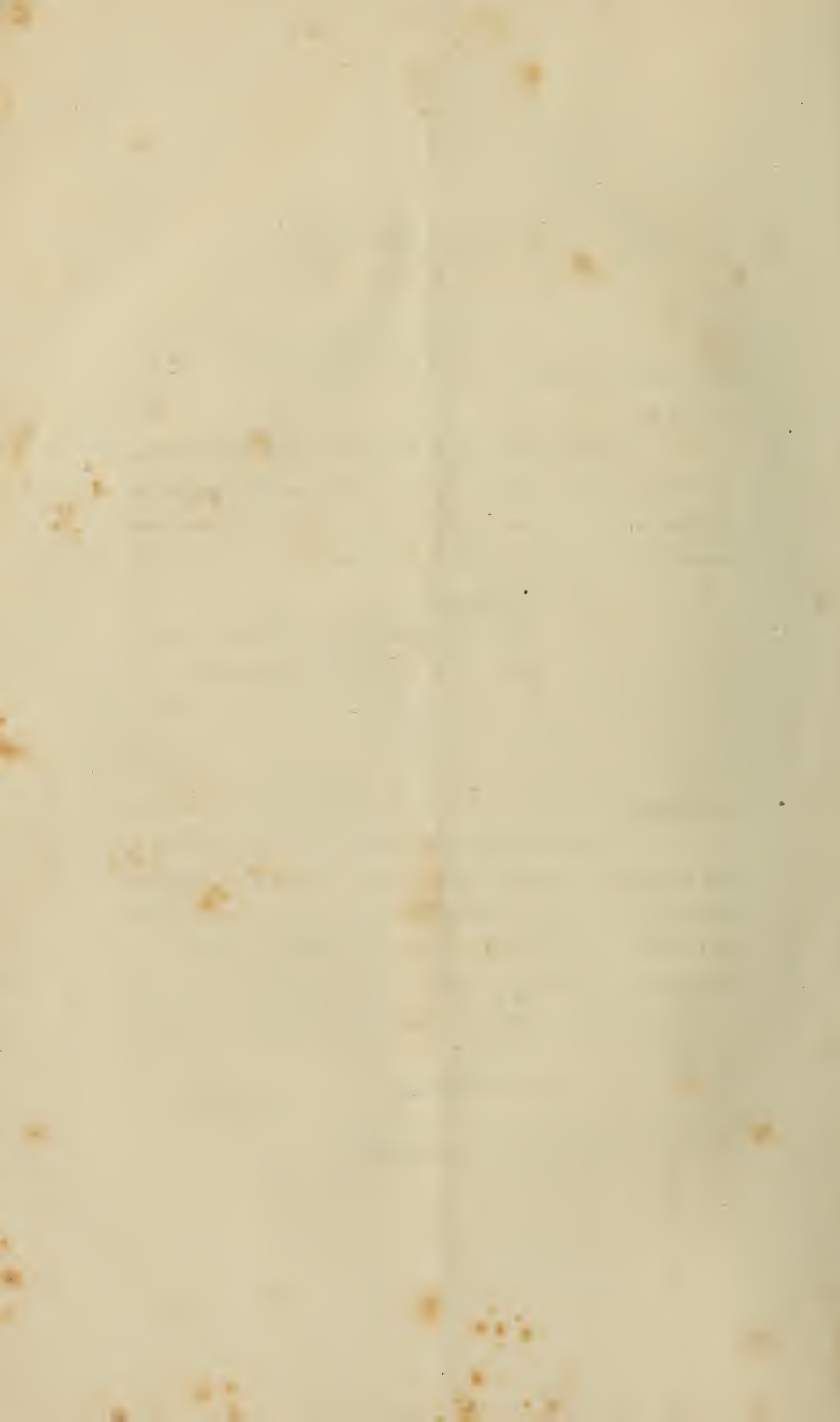
GENTLEMEN:—

I have received your letter of the first instant, requesting a copy of the ADDRESS delivered by me, before the LITERARY SOCIETIES of HAMILTON COLLEGE, for publication. Prepared as it was, in haste, and in the midst of a pressure of other duties, I am quite sensible of its many imperfections; but with all its faults, it is at your service; and as soon as my avocations will enable me to do so, I will furnish you the copy you desire.

Your obedient Servant,

P. GRIDLEY.

MESSRS. D. H. OLMSTEAD, }  
AND } COMMITTEE, &c.  
D. W. LANGFORD, }



# ADDRESS.

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YOUNG GENTLEMEN,

MEMBERS OF THE UNION AND PHOENIX SOCIETIES:—

In accepting the invitation of your Committee to address you upon this occasion, I overlooked the very inadequate preparation which a constant pressure of arduous duties would enable me to make; in the strong desire which I felt, to stand once more, after the lapse of many years, in the midst of these well-remembered scenes; and to call up, from the dusky shadows of the past, those early associations and those old memories, which are ever blended with by-gone visions of youthful happiness, and which the heart still cherishes, as among the most precious of its possessions.

I remembered, also, that there were some points of common interest and sympathy between us. We have walked the halls of the same honored seat of learning—we have gazed, alike, “many a time and oft,” from the summit of yonder classic hill upon that panorama of unrivaled beauty which nature has spread out beneath—we have been nursed in the lap of the same fair mother of arts—we have slaked our thirst at the same abundant fountain of instruction—and *there*, too, we have, alike, held high converse with the great spirits of the past, “who, though dead, yet speak to us,” in their immortal



works.—Recognizing these common ties of sympathy, and reflecting, that, standing, as a portion of your number now does, upon the very threshold of active life, your hearts must be swelling with the same emotions which once agitated those who have gone before you—that your bosoms are animated with the same hopes; trembling with the same apprehensions; and nerved, I trust, with the same high purpose, to do your behests like men, in the great struggle of life:—remembering, I say, all this, I could not forego the privilege of an elder brother, communing with the younger ones of the same “Alma Mater,” to take my place as a Mentor by your side, and to give you one word of counsel and encouragement, as you are stepping forth, in the buoyancy and inexperience of youth, upon the great theatre of active labor and duty.

To accomplish this, in some good degree, I propose to occupy the brief space of time allotted to this exercise in a consideration of the subject of

#### ENTHUSIASM

IN THE PURSUIT OF INTELLECTUAL AND MORAL EXCELLENCE.

I premise, however, that I do not employ this term in the sense attached to it by Locke and Taylor, by whom it is used as another name for fanaticism; but I use it to express that entire concentration and intense devotion of all the intellectual powers to the accomplishment of a given object;—that divine impulse of the mind, so to speak, which enlarges and elevates and invigorates all its faculties, until, inspired with a new and living energy, it seems to lose its very identity with the dull and powerless



being it was in its quiescent state.—I know that it has been held by some that this wonderful attribute of the mind is a quality *peculiar* to the fanciful and the imaginative : And while they admit that it constitutes the very inspiration of the Poet,

“ Whose eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,  
Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven ;”

and whose

“ Imagination bodies forth the forms of things unknown,  
And gives to airy nothing a local habitation and a name :”

They yet maintain that it is utterly incompatible with any severe or long continued process of thought. This, however, is by far too low an estimate of this wonder working power. Wherever the energies of the human mind have been most strenuously exerted ; wherever the most earnest and profound researches after truth have been conducted ; and wherever the most brilliant triumphs in the field of human knowledge have been achieved ; there, have been felt the presence and the power of this mighty agency. It crossed the Rubicon with Cæsar—it climbed the Alps with Hannibal—it traversed the burning sands of Egypt with Napoleon—it explored the trackless ocean with Columbus—it ascended the very “highest heaven of invention” with the Bard of Avon—and, with an eagle’s flight, it soared with Newton among the stars of heaven.

It may be instructive to make a nearer approach ; and to examine, with a closer observation, the operation of

this soul-elevating impulse upon a mind whose powers are expanding under its influence.

In yonder room, surrounded with books and implements of science, sits a student of nature, deeply intent on some absorbing subject of contemplation. It is the still hour of night, when the busy hum of industry, and the boisterous sounds of revelry, have alike died away, and nought of sound or sight exists to withdraw the attention, or to disturb the musings of the soul within. A single glance of the observer, revealing the deeply furrowed lines, the broad brow, the fixed yet eager look, and the face radiant with intellectual light ; indicates one, whose mind has escaped, for the time, from its earthly bonds, and is expatiating in the very heaven of thought. What to him are now the plots of ambition, or the schemes of avarice ? He is utterly indifferent whether *this* aspiring candidate for popular favor is crowned with success, or *that* one, prostrated in defeat — whether *this* bold speculation showers down the riches of Midas upon its authors, or *that* one plunges its projectors in hopeless ruin. His thoughts are far away — his soul has taken its flight into the distant provinces of creation ; and there he is taking the guage and measurement of yonder sun ; or, he is computing the distance of Sirius ; or, he is calculating the velocity, and predicting the precise period of the return of some eccentric orb, which, a century since, took its leave of our planet, and passed beyond the reach of telescopic vision ; or, he is computing the ages, which, in the cycles of eternal years, shall pass away, ere yon dim nebular spot, just visible in the depths of space, shall be moulded

into an orb of beauty, and take its place in some new-born constellation, to light up other skies in some distant portions of the universe.—These are the lofty subjects of his contemplation ; and by the side of the glories which cluster around his intellectual vision, all those objects that so powerfully engage the attention of men, fade away into insignificance. It may be, that the great philosopher gives no outward evidence of the deep enthusiasm which pervades every faculty of his mind : but think you that the feeling is less intense, because its emotions are suppressed ? In this deep abstraction of thought, which excludes the outward world, triumphs over the weakness of the body and the agony of pain, suspends the functions of the senses, and almost translates the ethereal spirit from its tenement of clay ; shall we deny the existence of this soul-elevating impulse, because its inspiration lies too deep for observation ?

Take another illustration.—A great orator is called to discuss before his countrymen some momentous question of public policy. Upon the issue of this question may depend the destiny of his country for weal or woe ; and the weight of the responsibility that rests upon him has chilled and paralyzed his faculties. The spectator sees the struggle that is passing within painted in striking lineaments upon his face. His thoughts are scattered and disjointed ; and his words fall feeble and powerless from his lips. His great mind is reeling and staggering under the pressure. As he proceeds, however, it becomes apparent that the great ocean of thought is becoming agitated in its inmost depths, and the dormant powers of

the orator are beginning to arouse themselves to their accustomed action. The will, which seemed, for the time, to have partaken of the universal paralysis, gradually regains its wonted control of the other faculties, and at length assumes its undisputed sovereignty : and anon, the understanding, the memory, the fancy, and the passions, are summoned up to do service at the bidding of the great master-spirit.—And now witness the mighty change ! “Thoughts that breathe and words that burn” rush unbidden for utterance—arguments the most profound and convincing ; imagery the most gorgeous and magnificent ; wit the most keen and polished ; invective the most terrible and desolating ; by turns seize upon, and take captive the mind of the hearer. A chain of irresistible argument has conducted every understanding to the conclusions sought by the speaker, while a torrent of vehement and impassioned eloquence has set all hearts on fire for action.—And the great orator stands forth, the noblest exhibition of that intellectual power, which not only subjects the material creation to its dominion, but rules with despotic sway the empire of mind itself.

Such we may conceive to be a feeble portrait of that great modern orator, of whom, one of his most distinguished rivals is reported to have said, after listening to one of his magnificent perorations ; that he went away “lost in amazement, at the compass, till then unknown to him, of human eloquence ;” or, it may furnish an illustration of the power of the great prince of ancient oratory himself ; who, in the greatest of his orations which have come down to us, (I allude to



that upon the Crown,) in the language of a distinguished critic, after having put forth his masterly self-vindication, poured an overwhelming torrent of accusation upon the head of his shrinking adversary, and then broke away into a long-continued strain of more than mortal eloquence which left every competitor, ancient or modern, utterly out of sight.

These, however, are illustrations of this wonder working power in its very boldest relief, and in its most striking aspects. Few can aspire to be a Newton or LaPlace, a Demosthenes or a Pitt. Nevertheless, if you would reach any high degree of intellectual excellence, you must employ the same means which they employed, and travel the same beaten path which they have trodden before you. And if this intellectual enthusiasm was necessary to their gigantic efforts, the same energetic impulse must ensure your triumphs in less arduous enterprises. It, therefore, becomes an important inquiry, how this high attribute of the mind is to be acquired.

In a great degree, I doubt not, it is, like all other intellectual endowments, the gift of God, and is made by him to depend upon a happy physical organization. For, while I disclaim all allegiance to the modern system of materialism, called by its advocates, the science of Phrenology, and withhold my assent from its startling principles and more startling conclusions, simply because they are not proven; we are yet compelled to admit, as an undeniable fact, that in this mysterious union between mind and matter; between the soul, destined to an immortal life, and its earthly tabernacle, which is doomed

to perish ; the manifestations of thought are in a high degree dependent on the organization of the body. *How* it is so, or *why* it is so, we can not tell ; but *that* it is so, is too clear to admit of a doubt. The temperament, the nervous system, and the brain especially, exercise an inexplicable, but yet an undeniable agency in the production of thought. And as these elements differ in different individuals, so do the mental exhibitions which depend upon them. It is impossible to maintain that Pascal and Margaret Davidson were not indebted for the early development of their almost seraphic powers, to a finer material organism than falls to the lot of ordinary mortals.

But though it must be conceded that Providence, in the structure of our bodies, may have caused this power to exist in greater excellence in some individuals than in others, as it hath made one star to differ from another star in glory, it is yet a cheering and consoling truth, that it is capable, in all, of an indefinite degree of improvement by CULTIVATION.

This is a law of our nature, both physical and intellectual. Training and exercise have performed wonders upon the mere physical powers of man. Under the plastic hand of art, the greatest natural defects have been overcome. The athlete, the boxer, the racer, the mountebank, and the gladiator, are all familiar instances of what may be done by skill and persevering effort in increasing the strength, agility, and dexterity of the human frame. A somewhat higher and more striking instance of the effect of persevering practice has been



given in the player upon the violin or piano, where the surprising activity of the fingers is only equaled by the rapidity of thought and will which precede every contraction of the muscles. Another instance quite as striking, and which I do not remember to have seen noticed, is furnished in the facility with which an experienced bank clerk will count, examine, and lay off a pile of bank notes. When it is remembered that in the inspection of each particular bill, the operator has to determine its denomination, the bank that issued it, and to mark the least possible variation between the engraving and signature of the note, and the ideal prototype in his mind ; it is wonderful that all this can be done, as it daily is, by the practiced clerk, with the rapidity of thought itself. A Locke or a Bacon would be as powerless to achieve this feat as the most illiterate boor. The same law applies, in a still more wonderful degree, to the higher faculties of the mind. And it is only necessary to compare the intellect of Newton, such as we know it to have been, with the same intellect if he had been born and bred a savage, to verify this position.

It is by *cultivation*, therefore, that you are to improve *this* faculty of the mind as well as every other. Some one may ask, How can I cultivate an impulse which I do not feel? I can solve a problem, which has been assigned me as a duty, but I regard it as a task, and feel no pleasure in the exercise.—I answer, you must solve problems, till the exercise becomes a pleasure ; which it infallibly will, if you repeat the experiment, as often and in the spirit that you should do. There is no mental

exercise which habit will not render comparatively easy ; and when severe intellectual labor is crowned with success, it becomes a positive enjoyment ; and this enjoyment has been known to be so intense as to make the subjects of it forget the proprieties of time and place in the exuberance of their joy.—The Syracusan Sage is said to have disturbed the town by shouting his “*Eureka* ;” and Sir Humphrey Davy leaped about his room in unrestrained exultation, as his eye descried the glittering metallic drop, which was to form an era in chemical science, and to inscribe his name on the imperishable records of fame.

In *some*, and, perhaps, in *most* minds, there is a reluctance to COMMENCE an intellectual effort.—Such, we are informed was the case with the great Dr. Johnson. Though possessed of gigantic powers, he needed the stimulus of necessity to call them forth ; and it was fortunate for him, and still more fortunate for posterity, that this stimulus was frequently applied. Perhaps the most striking effort of his genius (I allude to his *Rasselas*) was written during the evenings of a single week, to defray the expenses of his mother’s funeral. It would be curious and instructive to notice the operations of his mind in the composition of this immortal work.—It is easy to imagine the sorrow and distaste with which he assumed the pen, and sat down to the ungrateful task. He may have struggled through a few of the first sentences with reluctance and difficulty. But as his mind applied itself to the subject it would kindle and glow with the exercise, until it would be filled with joy

and exultation in its own beautiful and brilliant creations. The apathy of indolence, and the sorrow of bereavement, would give place to an intense excitement, and a glowing enthusiasm ; an enthusiasm which bestows the rewards, as assuredly as it exalts the powers, of genius. Thus was the great Johnson rewarded for his mental toil,—and thus shall every honest and high souled aspirant after moral and intellectual excellence be ultimately rewarded, humble though he be, in comparison with his great exemplar.

One of the most remarkable instances of that enthusiastic resolution, which is born of necessity and conquers difficulties, is exemplified in the life of Nelson the blind teacher, in New York, as it is given in a most interesting biography of one who was his pupil.—“ Total blindness, after a long and gradual advance, came upon him about his twentieth year, when terminating his College course. It found him poor, and left him, to all appearance, penniless and wretched, with two sisters to maintain,—without money, without friends, without a profession, and without sight. Under such an accumulation of griefs most minds would have sunk ; but with him it was otherwise. At all times proud and resolute, his spirit rose at once into what might be called the fierceness of independence ;—he resolved within himself to be indebted for support to no hand but his own. His classical education, which from his feeble vision, had been necessarily imperfect, he now determined to complete, and immediately entered upon the apparently hopeless task. With a view to fit himself

for a teacher of youth, he instructed his sisters in the pronunciation of Greek and Latin, and employed one or the other constantly in reading aloud to him the classics usually taught in the schools. A naturally faithful memory, spurred on by such strong excitement, performed its oft repeated miracles; and in a space of time incredibly short, he became master of their contents, even to the minutest points of critical reading.—At this period a gentleman who incidentally became acquainted with his history, in a feeling somewhere between pity and confidence, placed his two sons under his charge, with a view to enable him to try the experiment. A few months' trial was sufficient; he then fearlessly appeared before the public, and at once challenged a comparison with the best established classical schools in the city.—The novelty and boldness of the attempt attracted general attention; the lofty confidence he displayed in himself, excited respect; and soon his untiring assiduity, his real knowledge, and a burning zeal, which, knowing no bounds in his devotion to his scholars, awakened somewhat of a corresponding spirit in their minds, and completed the conquest.—His reputation spread daily; scholars flocked to him in crowds; competition sunk before him; and in the course of a very few years he found himself in the enjoyment of an income superior to that of any College patronage in the United States; with to him the infinitely higher gratification of having risen above the pity of the world, and fought his own blind way to independence."



This is, indeed, a most remarkable instance of the triumph of an enthusiastic and energetic spirit over difficulties, before which ordinary minds would have sunk in hopeless apathy.

It is this lofty and indomitable purpose to excel, connected with an opportunity and scope for the exercise of high intellectual powers, which has made the Cæsars and the Bonapartes, the Homers and the Miltons of the world. And most beautifully has Gray expressed this truth, and mourned over the want of opportunity that prevented the growth and expansion of glorious qualities in many a humble son of genius, in the following stanzas of his inimitable Elegy :

“Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid

Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire ;

Hands that the rod of empire might have swayed,

Or waked to extacy the living lyre.

“But Knowledge to their eyes her ample page,

Rich with the spoils of time, did ne’er unroll ;

Chill penury repressed their noble rage

And froze the genial current of the soul.

“Some village Hampden that, with dauntless breast,

The little tyrant of the fields withstood ;

Some mute, inglorious Milton here may rest ;

Some Cromwell, guiltless of his country’s blood.”

Philosophy never spoke more truthfully than poetry does here. Multitudes there are who pass through life in obscurity, simply for the want of opportunity or necessity to call forth their dormant powers. Washington, with his world-wide fame, might have died “unhonored

and unsung," had not our revolutionary struggle called forth his great qualities, and hung his name up on high for the gaze and admiration of the world.

It will be perceived that I have hitherto treated this subject, chiefly as a means of increasing the power and efficiency of the INTELLECTUAL FACULTIES. But whether an increase of intellectual power will in any given case be a blessing or a curse, will depend on the uses to be made of it. It may become a mighty agent for good, or a powerful instrument of evil, according to the disposition and will of its possessor. Attila gloried in the appellation of the Scourge of God, and boasted that the ground on which his horse's hoofs had once trodden was blasted with eternal desolation. Voltaire was the Attila of the moral world ;—and wherever the breath of his pestiferous principles has been felt, it has extinguished every principle of human virtue and blasted every flower of human happiness. The pestilence not only spread its baneful influence over the plains of his own beautiful France, but has crossed the ocean, and become, among us, the prolific parent of error and vice and crime, in a thousand multiform shapes. Similar results have ever followed the prostitution of high intellectual powers to the cause of vice ; and the enemy of virtue is dangerous to human happiness in proportion to the talents with which he is endowed, and the energy with which he has been trained to exert them.—Let us turn, however, from the mournful spectacle of talents not merely *wasted* but *perverted*, to the sublime exhibiton of great qualities



devoted to the cause of justice and humanity. It is impossible here, even to catalogue the names of the great apostles of benevolence, who have, in every age, illustrated the virtues of human sympathy ; and, having fulfilled the mission of Him who sent them, have passed away to their rewards above. It is pleasant to turn away from the bloody page which records the frauds and crimes, the robberies and murders, which man has, in every age, committed against his fellow, to the contemplation of the characters of a Socrates and a Cicero, a Locke and a Milton, a Howard and a Clarkson, a Washington and a Franklin ; names which will never die, but which will live on through all time, growing brighter and more glorious, while a sentiment of justice is felt, or a cord of sympathetic feeling vibrates in the human heart.

And now, my young Friends, let me exhort you to go and do likewise ; and to follow, though at a humble distance, in the footsteps of these great exemplars. I do not mean that you are to engage in a crusade of benevolence ; or to devote your time, as Howard did, to a perpetual mission of charity. I know that circumstances will not allow you to do this, and rarely does duty demand it. I doubt not that the most of you will select some profession or calling which you will pursue as a means of providing for yourselves and your households ; but I *do mean*, that in the business or calling which you may select, you adopt the principles and exert your influence, as God may give you occasion and opportunity, on the side of justice and moral virtue. In

this country more than in any other, not only the tone of social life, but the character of our civil institutions, is dependent in no small degree upon the breath of public opinion. Your views spoken, and acted out, form part and parcel of that public opinion ; and will be more or less important as your position may give you an influence over the opinions and conduct of others. But whatever may be your profession or relations in life, there is a wide field spread out before you, in which you may, directly and indirectly, put forth a powerful influence in behalf of erring and suffering humanity.

Within a few years past, a stream of light has been shed down upon the social and political condition of man, and many of the dogmas of past ages, utterly incompatible with the principles of civil and religious liberty, are giving way before the steady light of reason, and the urgent claims of an expansive benevolence.

We are but just emerging from that night of darkness, when religious intolerance was the vice of the whole Christian world, and when, throughout the largest portion of Christendom, the duty was enjoined of destroying the body for the good of the soul. We are apt to congratulate ourselves with the idea, that this sin against the religion of peace lies exclusively at the door of Catholic Rome. And true it is, that to her alone belongs the exclusive claim to the bloody horrors of the inquisition, and to that system of military execution and massacre which drenched the fields of France and Spain and the Netherlands, with their most precious blood. Indeed, her's was a guilt of so deep a dye, that the sins

of Protestant England and America, in comparison, seem almost bleached to the whiteness of innocence.—But before we claim for Protestantism an entire exemption from the intolerance of religious persecution, we should call to mind the execution of Servetus, and the murder of Sharpe; and we should remember that, although the fires of Smithfield had ceased to blaze, with the death of the bloody Mary; yet, in the reign of Protestant Elizabeth, one hundred and ninety-nine persons suffered death, directly or indirectly on account of their religious faith. And especially does it behoove *us* to remember that the spray of the sea was scarcely dry upon the garments of our Pilgrim Fathers, before the Baptists and the Quakers learned that the asylum of the oppressed, the chosen resting place of religious liberty, was not exempt from the spirit of religious persecution.

This monstrous violation of human rights, and gross perversion of the spirit of all true religion, were the offspring of the moral darkness which pervaded the minds and consciences of men, and belonged rather to the *age*, than to the *character*, of individuals, or of creeds. This is especially true of the fathers of New England. For history has no record of a nobler race of men, more virtuous and self-sacrificing, more enlightened or farther advanced, for the age in which they lived, in the science of civil and religious liberty, than that heroic band of Pilgrims, who, amidst the rigors of a northern winter, surrounded by savage foes, and in the face of famine, pestilence, and death, colonized New England, and laid the foundations of an empire.—God grant that their

descendants may ever emulate their high principle, and never dishonor their ancestry by a departure from an example of unselfish patriotism, and uncompromising virtue. Hence it is, I say, that impartial Justice herself will charge the enormities of which I have spoken, in a great degree, upon the moral darkness of the age in which they were committed ; and hence it is, too, that to dissipate the lingering shadows of that darkness, is needed the active influence of all who regard with favor the advancement and progress of the human race.

*Again :* We live in a land, the freest of any upon which the sun shines ; and we have, moreover, declared, in a national manifesto, that “all men are created free and equal.” Yet we behold the spectre of Slavery spreading his sable wings over the fairest portion of our wide domain. A multitude of our fellow-citizens, shocked at this monstrous outrage upon human rights, have banded themselves together for the extirpation of this great social and political evil ; and, to accomplish this object, have adopted principles in violation of the Constitution and fatal to the Union. While we can not approve of their revolutionary measures, and believe them hostile to the best interests of the slave himself ; we, yet, in common with all the friends of the human race, deeply sympathize with them in their abhorrence of slavery, and respond with our whole hearts to the sentiment of Jefferson, when he said, with reference to this enormous national crime ; “I tremble for my country, when I remember that God is just.” Human Charity herself is shocked to see the most distinguished statesman of the



South, in defiance of the common sentiment of the whole civilized world, boldly put to hazard his reputation with posterity, by an audacious defence of a system which declares the contract of marriage a *nudum pactum*; which abrogates the relation of parent and child; which tears the helpless infant from the arms of its mother, and sells it to a distant and hopeless bondage; which makes it felony to teach a slave to read the Gospel of his Savior: a system, in fine, which is bathed in the tears, and baptized in the blood of its victims.

*Again:* Good men and philanthropists believe that the day is approaching when war will come to be regarded as a remnant of barbarism; and when national controversies will be settled by the arbitration of some friendly power, or decided before some august tribunal, established by the united consent of civilized and Christian nations. This is a consummation most devoutly to be wished, by every friend of the human race. In the present and past condition of the world, I do not mean to affirm that wars may not sometimes be necessary and justifiable. But to make them so, the benefits to be gained for man must overbalance the evils, which inevitably follow in the train of war; and those evils are of such a magnitude, that they can scarcely be overestimated. A distinguished philanthropist, recently deceased, has said—"The greatest curse that can be entailed upon mankind is a state of war. All the atrocious crimes committed in years of peace—all that is spent in peace by the secret corruptions, or by the thoughtless extravagance of nations, are mere trifles,

compared with the gigantic evils which stalk over the world, in a state of war. God is forgotten in war—every principle of Christian charity trampled upon,—human labor destroyed,—human industry extinguished;—you see the son and the husband and the brother dying miserably in distant lands;—you see the waste of human affections;—you see the breaking of human hearts;—you hear the shrieks of widows and children after the battle; and you walk over the mangled bodies of the wounded, calling for death.” Nothing can be added to this frightful group of horrors, which the hand of truth has here sketched as with a pencil of light; and surely nothing more is needed to make us put forth our every exertion, to hasten the auspicious hour when, in the progress of the just principles of human government, the nations shall learn war no more.

These are some of the evils which apply to man in his *social state* and in his *national capacity*; the removal of which can only be effected by an enlightened public opinion. And who, as a class, are to form and direct public opinion in America, if it be not the liberally educated class? If all the graduates of all the institutions of learning, for the next twenty years, should be found contributing their influence to a judicious and salutary reform, and to the elevation of the masses, in intelligence, virtue, and happiness, what a glorious triumph of philanthropy should we not witness?—These, however, are not the only ways in which an educated man can discharge his duty and fulfill his mission of



benevolence to his kind. Wherever human frailty, ignorance, vice, crime, and suffering exist, *there* is a field for action in the various ways which Providence may open to him, who is urged by a generous enthusiasm to occupy it.

If he is called to legislate in the councils of the State or Nation, let him see to it, that he makes the principle of "the greatest happiness of the greatest number," in a high and enlightened sense, not that of the demagogue, his cardinal principle of action. Let him vigorously oppose all unjust and partisan legislation, addressed to a particular section or class, to secure their votes for his party. Let him give a hearty assent to every measure for the just advancement of popular rights ;—but let him have the firmness to resist the demagogue's appeal for that largest liberty, which consists in an exemption alike from the obligation of contracts, and the restraints of law ; and which gives a license to the idle and the fraudulent, to prey upon the earnings of the industrious and provident.

If he is called to aid in the administration of the law, as a counselor, let him never forget, that the attainment of justice is the end and aim of his noble profession ; and let him never seek to sacrifice substantial right to the technicalities and chicanery of form ; and while he insists, as he should do, that justice should be administered *according* to law, let him never descend to mere tricks and contrivances, which sometimes make the very forms of law the instruments of working injustice and oppression.

If it should be his fortune to minister in the sacred desk, and I were permitted to suggest a word of advice, it would be, to exhort him to eschew a spirit of controversy, and to bear it constantly in mind, that *his*, is, in a peculiar sense, a mission of charity and love ; and that his vocation is, to succor the needy, to visit the poor, to comfort the afflicted, and to pour oil and wine into the wounds of the broken and contrite heart. And above all, let him be imbued with a deep sense of the high character of the profession which he has chosen. The subjects of his communications to his people embrace the most sublime and momentous considerations, that can be addressed to the human heart. And if his spirit can not kindle and glow in the contemplation of such mighty themes—if he can not rise above the dull formalities of a cold, commonplace morality, as his mind yields to a just view of the immense value of those immortal interests, of which he has assumed the charge ; and as his vision opens upon that world of sublime and thrilling objects of thought, which the teacher of religion must be accustomed to contemplate ; then, indeed, is he wanting, either in a fervid devotion to the cause of his Master, or in sympathy for his erring brother, for whose restoration to virtue and happiness, he was sent to labor.

And here it was a part of my plan to have enlarged somewhat in detail upon the *excesses* and *abuses* of this enthusiasm, of which I have been treating ; but the limits of this address will not allow me to do so. I will only say, that the enthusiasm which I have ventured to recommend, is not a blind and inconsiderate impulse,

but a disciplined and enlightened energy of purpose, which pursues, with resolute determination, the path of knowledge and virtue, while the light of truth shines upon its footsteps. It is subordinate to, and controlled by, a sound discretion; and is equally opposed to that reckless devotion to intellectual improvement, which has sent so many lamented sons of genius to an early grave; and to that inconsiderate rashness, which has characterized the measures of many of the friends of a virtuous reform, and has entailed upon their well-meant efforts, the most disastrous consequences.

But, while I would caution you to avoid the dangers of impetuous and undisciplined impulse in the pursuit of any object—however meritorious; I would earnestly exhort you to engage, with a generous enthusiasm and a resolute purpose, in the great cause of human progress and advancement.

You will remember, that no great and enduring good has ever been achieved, without this ardent devotion of the mind to the accomplishment of its object. *Without this*, the great Luther would have laid his shaven crown in the grave, without striking a single blow for truth, or sounding that trumpet peal, which rang terror and alarm through all the departments of ecclesiastical corruption. *Without this*, Columbus would have passed away, in the odor of sanctity; and this great continent would have slept in the silence of undiscovered obscurity, and no sound been heard across the vast extent of forest and prairie, but the scream of the panther or the yell of the savage. *Without this*, all the arts that adorn and

humanize life, would have slumbered in the lap of primeval barbarism; and those forms of beauty which have illustrated the classic ages of Greece and Rome, would have still lain dormant in the yet unquarried marble. *Without this*, Socrates, nature's great theologian, would have knelt in the sincerity of superstitious reverence, before the shrine of his country's idols, and never "looked up through nature's works, to nature's God." *Without this*, Paul would have continued his lessons at the feet of Gamaliel, instead of proclaiming the Unknown God, in those solemn temples and marble halls, which were still vocal with the echoes of Grecian eloquence. And in one word, *without this*, the human mind, sunk in ignorance and debased by superstition, would never have abjured its connection with the clod of the valley, nor risen in the dignity of its immortal attributes, to claim its parentage of the Father of Spirits.

You will remember, too, that the period during which any individual can render efficient service in the cause of *man*, is necessarily brief;—the longest life is inadequate to the development and consummation of any plan which is to tell upon the ultimate character and permanent prospects of the race. It is only by a succession of happy influences, operating by the instrumentality of successive agencies, upon successive generations of men, that the human race can be rescued from the manifold evils which ignorance and crime have entailed upon it.

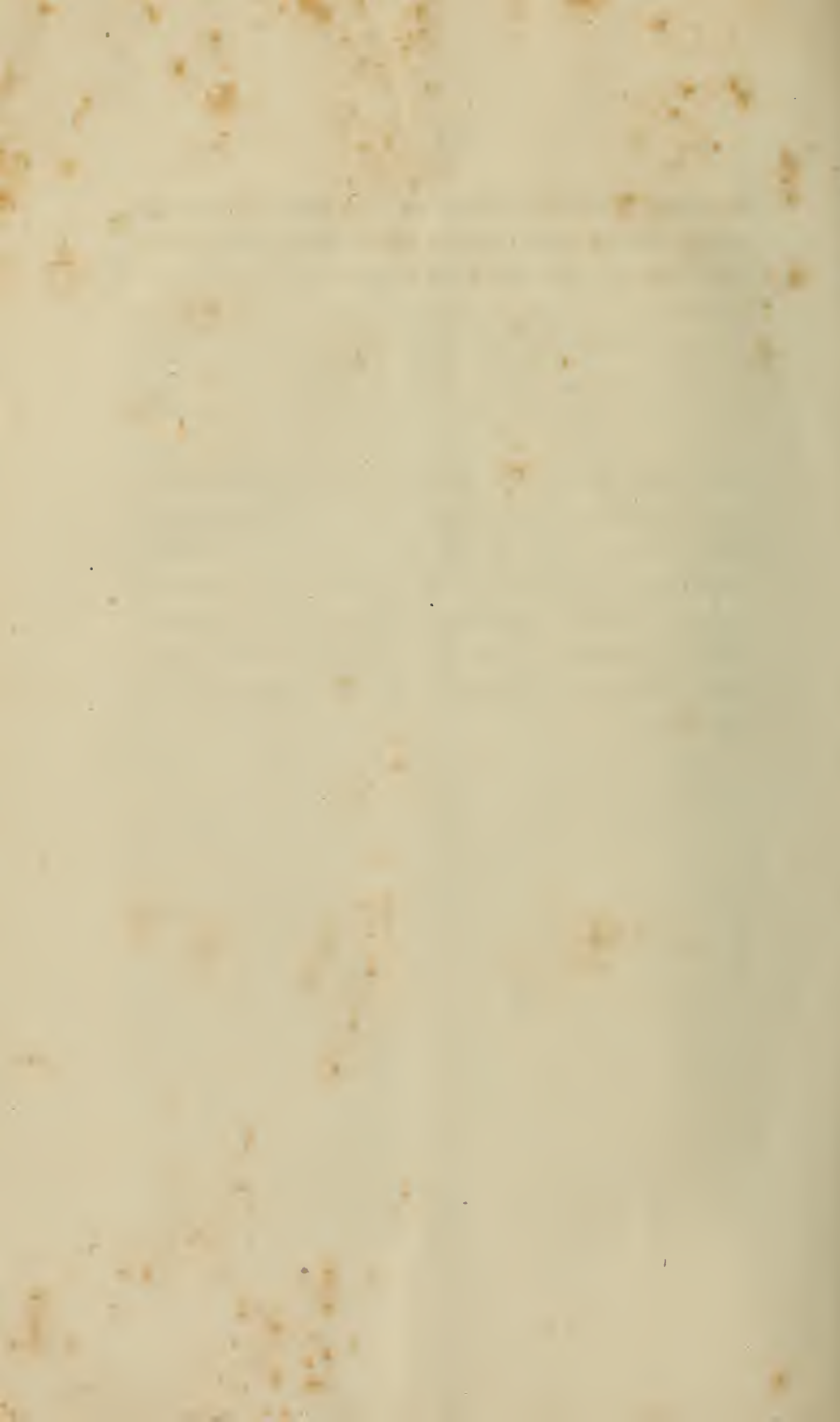
No, my young Friends, our lives are too ephemeral in duration to witness the end and accomplishment of any extended plan of human reform. We have all joined



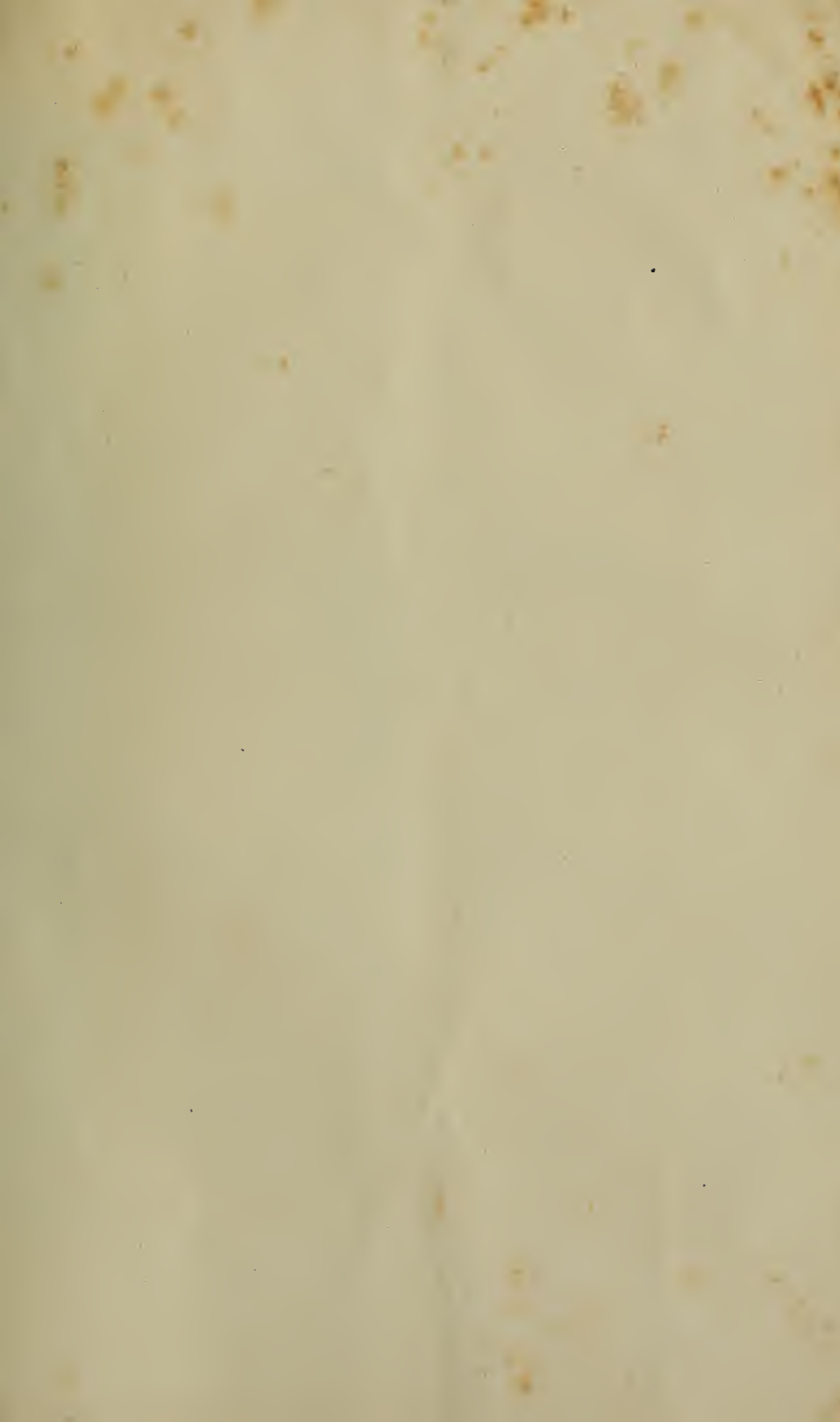
the great procession, which is marching onward, as rapidly as the flight of time, to the land of shadows. Well and truly has the Poet said—

“ Art is long, but life is fleeting,  
And our hearts, though stout and brave,  
Still, like muffled drums, are beating  
Funeral marches, to the grave.”

In the light, then, of this solemn truth, let me exhort you, in the language of the Inspired Volume, “Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do,” in the great cause of humanity, “do it with thy might,”—do it with an unfaltering zeal, and an energy of purpose, which shall brook neither delay nor obstacle, “for there is no work, nor device, nor wisdom, nor knowledge, in the grave, whither thou goest.”







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